

AN ANALYSIS OF SEX-ROLES AND THEIR RELATIONSHIPS
TO SELF-ESTEEM, BIRTH ORDER, RACE,
SOCIOECONOMIC CLASS, AND AGE

An Abstract of a Dissertation by
Dianne Alber
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Drake University
Advisor: Dr. Lawrence Fanning

The problem. The purpose of the study was to determine the relationships between sex-roles and the variables of self-esteem, birth order, race, socioeconomic class, and age. Recent research results are divided between encouraged adoption of androgynous and masculine sex-roles. Many studies indicate that so called androgynous individuals are higher in self-esteem and more self-actualized than other individuals. Other recent research indicates that the masculine sex-role for men and women provides higher self-esteem and fewer psychological problems. The purpose of this study was to determine which sex-role provided the highest self-esteem scores for students in a technical high school. The study also examined the four sex-roles to determine if sex-roles and independent of birth order, race, socioeconomic class, and age.

Procedure. Subjects were students at Des Moines Technical High School who volunteered to participate in the study. Participants were given the Bem Sex-Role Inventory and the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory. Subjects were asked to identify their birth order as first or only, middle or youngest. Subjects also stated their race, age to the nearest year, and occupation of head of household.

An analysis of variance was performed for the sex-roles and self-esteem. To determine placement of significant differences t-tests were performed. Chi squares of independence were performed for sex-roles and birth order, sex-roles and race, sex-roles and socioeconomic class, and sex-roles and age.

Findings. Results of the study indicated that students who adopted the masculine sex-role were significantly higher in self-esteem than androgynous students. Androgynous students were significantly higher in self-esteem than feminine and undifferentiated students. Feminine and undifferentiated students were not significantly different from each other in terms of self-esteem.

The results indicated that sex-roles were not independent of sex. There was little cross sex-typing. Sex-roles for this group appeared to be independent of birth order, age, race and socioeconomic status.

Conclusions. The results of the study fails to resolve the controversy concerning which sex-role is the best in terms of self-esteem. Although findings of the study were based on a rather select group of students, it should add to the pool of knowledge on sex-roles and self-esteem. For this select group, it appeared that those who adopted the masculine sex-role were the highest in self-esteem. This evidence is contrary to the hypothesis that androgyny provides higher levels of self-esteem.

Recommendations. Based on this study, there is still a controversy as to which sex-role provides the highest self-esteem potential. More generalized studies must be done with larger random samples from less specialized populations before the findings could be generalized further.

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Doctor of Education


by
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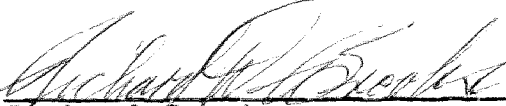
Dianne Alber


Approved by Committee:


Lawrence Fanning, Chairperson


Howard Traxler


Bruce Vennard


Richard Brooks


James Whitehouse


Earle Canfield, Dean of the School
of Graduate Studies

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

It has been generally accepted that men and women differ in attitudes, values and behavior. These differences are apparent from early in life. "Until recently, psychological and sociological research has done little to help people understand the reasons for the differences in behavior, values, and attitudes of men and women. Instead of studying how men and women could become more alike, psychologists have usually regarded gender-related traits as a given and focused their attention on describing and contrasting female and male behaviors. Similarly, these psychologists have taken race and social class as givens and attempted to study the myriad differences associated with race and class, giving little attention either to the problems in defining these categories or to their limitations."¹

Recent research is controversial as to the relation between sex-roles and corresponding personality attributes. Bem and her colleagues argue that individuals can

¹Alice Sargent, Beyond Sex Roles (St. Paul: West Publishing Co., 1977), p. 145.

be androgynous as well as masculine and feminine. The androgynous individual is one who demonstrates masculine and feminine attributes at approximately equal levels.¹

Janet Spence divides the androgynous category into two parts. She suggests that those individuals who are high in masculine and feminine characteristics are different from those who are low in both masculine and feminine characteristics. This new sex-role category provides masculine, feminine, androgynous, and undifferentiated as sex-role possibilities.²

Broverman et. al.³ showed that clinicians viewed masculine characteristics as exemplifying attributes of the healthy adult. Clinicians viewed feminine characteristics as less healthy for the adult than masculine characteristics.

Janet LaVanche and John Garske⁴ demonstrated that the masculine sex-role provided higher levels of self-esteem than did the other sex-role possibilities. Masculine subjects also demonstrated fewer emotional difficulties.

¹Sandra L. Bem, "The Measurement of Psychological Androgyny." Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology. XLII (1977), 155-162.

²Janet Spence, R. Helmreich and J. Stapp, "Ratings of Self and Peers on Sex-Role Attributes and Their Relation to Self-Esteem and Conception of Masculinity and Femininity." Journal of Personality and Social Psychology. XXXIII (1975), 29-39.

³Inge Broverman, D. M. Broverman, T. E. Clarkson and P. S. Rosenkrantz. "Sex-Role Stereotypes and Clinical Judgments of Mental Health." Journal of Consulting Psychology. XXXIV (1970), 1-7.

⁴Janet LaVanche and John P. Garske. "Effects of

Rationale

In the American society, the range of human characteristics is generally split into two categories: those assigned to men and those assigned to women. Some traits are shared by the sexes, but many are assigned to only one sex. The division often exists more in belief than in actuality. These beliefs cause some people to feel inadequate when they do not meet the expectations of "what a man or a woman does."¹

Being masculine implies being assertive, analytical and manipulative. It is the man who is traditionally skilled in leadership. Being masculine also implies being unexpressive and unemotional. Men are not expected to be adept at managing interpersonal affairs.²

Being feminine implies interdependence, interest in others, and skill in interpersonal relationships. Women are seen as tender, empathetic, and submissive. Self-esteem of women is viewed as being derived from pleasing others, particularly men. Being feminine means being inferior to men in the affairs of the world. Women are often taught to be too emotional.³

Masculinity, Femininity and Psychological Androgyny on Adjustment and Defense Mechanisms." Paper presented at Midwestern Psychological Association Convention, Chicago, Illinois, May 4, 1979.

¹Barbara Forisha. Sex Roles and Personal Awareness. (Morristown, New Jersey: Silver Burdett Co., 1978), p. 23.

²Ibid., p. 23.

³Ibid., p. 25.

Masculine and feminine individuals tend to be role-oriented whereas the androgynous individual is process-oriented. This person is less bound by the past and less concerned with the future. The process-oriented individual has the ability to be alone or with others. This person can communicate with others honestly. However, there are both assets and liabilities to this type of orientation. These individuals benefit from their lack of role orientation, but may occasionally suffer from living in a society oriented to traditional sex-roles.¹

If these ideas of sex-roles are valid, the androgynous individuals should be higher in self-esteem than other individuals. The purpose of this study was to determine which sex-role provided the greatest self-esteem for high school students. A second purpose was to determine if relationships existed between sex-roles and sex, age, race, birth order, and socioeconomic status.

Statement of the Problem

The major purpose of this study was to determine which sex-role provided the highest level of self-esteem for these subjects. The second purpose was to determine if relationships existed between sex-roles and sex, age, birth order, and socioeconomic status of the participants.

¹Ibid., p. 105.

1. Which sex-role provided the highest level of self-esteem?

Hypothesis 1: The mean self-esteem score is the same for masculine, feminine, androgynous, and undifferentiated subjects.

2. Are sex-roles independent of birth order, race, socioeconomic status, and age?

Hypothesis 2: Sex-roles are independent of birth order.

Hypothesis 3: Sex-roles are independent of race.

Hypothesis 4: Sex-roles are independent of socioeconomic status.

Hypothesis 5: Sex-roles are independent of age.

Delimitations of the Study

This study was limited to students at Des Moines Technical High School who volunteered to participate.

Assumptions

Use of a non-random available sample prohibits any assumptions as to the generalizability of the data from subjects to any different population.

Treatment of Data

Inferential rather than descriptive statistics were used to determine if observed differences in sample values were large enough to go beyond mere chance. It was not, however, intended to be used to make inferences about a larger population.

Definition of Terms

These terms were defined to avoid confusion for the reader.

Masculine: Individuals scoring above the median for masculine items on the Bem Sex-Role Inventory and below the median for feminine items on the same scale. This individual would describe himself/herself as generally aggressive, independent, and assertive.

Feminine: Individuals scoring below the median for masculine items on the Bem Sex-Role Inventory and above the median for feminine items on the same scale. This individual would generally describe himself/herself as affectionate, understanding, and yielding.

Androgynous: Individuals scoring above the median for masculine items on the Bem Sex-Role Inventory and above the median for feminine items on the same scale. This individual would generally describe himself/herself as aggressive, loving, independent, yielding, assertive, and understanding at the same time.

Undifferentiated: Individuals scoring below the median for masculine items on the Bem Sex-Role Inventory and below the median for feminine items on the same scale. This individual would describe himself/herself much the same as the androgynous

individual but at a lower level of both masculine and feminine characteristics.

Sex-Typing: Adoption of a sex-role.

Cross Sex-Typing: Adopting a sex-role assigned to the opposite sex.

Chapter 2

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Biological Aspects of Sex-Roles

When the x chromosome combines with another x or a y chromosome, it is only the beginning of sex determination. Male and female embryos look identical during the first stages of development. The embryo has all the necessary materials for developing into either sex.¹

In the male embryo, the Mullerian-inhibiting substance suppresses all further development of the Mullerian ducts which would develop into the uterus, fallopian tubes, and upper part of the vagina. If the substance fails to function, a male is born with a uterus and fallopian tubes in addition to the regular male sex organs.²

Testosterone governs the formation of the male's internal reproductive structure. When the testosterone circulates through the bloodstream, it causes the formation of the external sex organs including the penis and the scrotum.³

¹Robert H. Loeb, Jr., and Vidal Clay, Breaking The Sex Role Barrier (New York, London: Franklin Watts, 1977), p. 12.

²Ibid., p. 13.

³Ibid.

Sex differentiation in the female begins around the twelfth week. If, at that time when the ovaries form, the adrenal glands do not function properly, androgen (the male sex hormone) may be produced. Under these conditions a female may be produced with a penis. Surgery may be performed at this time to correct the external abnormalities. Faulty functioning of the adrenal gland is corrected by injecting cortisone during the female's growing period.¹

The first person who assigns sex to the baby is the physician. He does not make a decision solely on the absence or presence of a penis or vagina. Other factors may be considered. In most cases, as soon as the announcement is made, society takes over. Family members clothe the baby in the proper manner. The initial "gender branding" begins a whole series of sex identification activities.²

Early Socialization

During early childhood, masculine and feminine behaviors are prescribed according to culture. Youngsters are socialized to exhibit personality characteristics which are deemed appropriate. In most cultures, females are socialized in the area of nurturance and obedience. Males are pressured toward self-reliance and independence. Most

¹Ibid., p. 14.

²Ibid., p. 22.

parents have firm notions about sex appropriate behavior. Many parents share cultural stereotypes and transmit them to their offspring.

Before age five, children are generally aware of sex appropriate interests and behavior. Children of this age will demonstrate preference for objects and play appropriate to their own sex. Sandra Bem and Ellen Lenney¹ of Stanford University presented evidence for the hypothesis that cross-sex behavior causes anxiety for sex-typed individuals and they will try to avoid inappropriate activity. Engaging in cross-sex behavior causes sex-typed subjects greater reported psychological discomfort and negative feelings about themselves.

Ronald G. Slaby and Karin S. Frey² at the University of Washington identified four developmental levels of gender identity in preschool children. The authors are of the opinion that children learn from and imitate same-sex models rather than opposite sex models. This may occur because the child perceives the same-sex model to be more like himself/herself.

Parents provide rewards for sex-appropriate behavior and punishment for sex-inappropriate behavior. Older siblings and peers also participate in sex-role training. According to Mussen, Conger, and Kagan, the

¹Sandra L. Bem and Ellen Lenney, "Sex Typing and Avoidance of Cross Sex Behavior," Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, XXXIII, No. 1 (1976), 48-54.

²Ronald G. Slaby and Karin S. Frey, "Development of

ideal training situation would be a nurturant same-sex parent with desirable characteristics and both parents being consistent in their rewards of appropriate sex-role identification. Boys identify with their fathers more often when they perceive the father as being strong, powerful, and nurturant.¹

Highly masculine boys are those who strongly identify with their fathers. These boys perceive their fathers as being more powerful and nurturant than do low masculine boys. Highly feminine girls report more intense and warmer relationships with their mothers than do low feminine girls. The identification process was initiated early in life by labeling the child as a boy or a girl. The child's self-concepts about his/her sex-role become stabilized at about five or six years of age.²

Social Learning Theory of Sex-Role Development

Psychosexual development involves behavior associated with masculine or feminine sex-roles. According to social learning theory, sex-typing begins with discrimination of

Gender Constancy and Selective Attention to Same-Sex Models." Child Development, XLVI (1975), 849-856.

¹Paul Henry Mussen, John Janeway Conger, and Jerome Kagan, Child Development and Personality (New York: Harper and Row, 1974), p. 405.

²Ibid.

both masculine and feminine characteristics, and proceeds through generalization to performance. Sex-typing appears to follow the same learning principles as other parts of human behavior.¹

The social learning theory represents sex-role development as a trial and error process rather than the traditional Freudian view that males and females develop differently. The basic premise of the learning theory is that all organisms, including humans, tend to repeat responses which have been reinforced. To understand the strength of sex-role responses, it is necessary to examine the strength of individual rewards as well as the schedules of reinforcement. Reinforcement can occur directly or vicariously. We learn not only as a result of our own behavior but by observing consequences of the behavior of others. Imitation, identification, and modeling will most often occur when related to behaviors which have been reinforced. Behaviors which have been punished for others will less likely be repeated.²

Bandura³ presented a film to boys and girls showing a model which exhibited verbal and physical aggression. One group was shown punishment of the model following the aggression. The second treatment rewarded the model

¹Walter Mischel, "A Social Learning View of Sex Differences in Behavior," The Development of Sex Differences, ed. Eleanor Maccoby (Stanford University Press, 1966), p. 57.

²Ibid.

³A. Bandura, "Influence of Models and Reinforcement

following the aggression. A third treatment neither punished nor rewarded the model. Boys imitated aggression more than girls under all conditions. (Girls showed the least modeled aggression when aggression was punished.) After the initial film all three groups were offered incentives for modeling. These incentives eliminated previous performance differences. The initially great sex differences were eliminated. Bandura¹ suggests that it disproves that there is a deficit in masculine-role identification by girls.

Same sex parents are very important models for children. The sex of the child is assigned at birth and the parent of the same sex gives the first role model for sex-role development. If the parent is to be influential as a role model, he/she must possess certain characteristics. There must be a perceived similarity between the child and the role model. The model has high power of control over the person's life. The model is ideally more nurturant. As children imitate the actions of the same sex parents, there is vicarious and direct reinforcement.²

Cognitive Theory of Sex- Role Development

Much the same as the social learning theory, the cognitive theory of sex-role development tends to be non-

Contingencies on the Acquisition of Imitative Responses,"
Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, I (1965),
589-595.

¹Ibid.

²Ibid.

biological. Among others, Laurence Kohlberg¹ has proposed theories concerning sex-role development. "Children develop a conception of themselves as having an unchangeable sexual identity at the same age and through the same processes that they develop conceptions of the invariable identity of physical objects. The child's sexual identity is maintained by a motivated adaptation to physical-social reality and by the need to preserve a stable and positive self image."²

Kohlberg continues to discuss the ways in which sex-role concepts develop into masculine and feminine values.

- 1) The tendency to schematize interests and respond to new interests that are consistent with the old ones.
- 2) The tendency to make value judgments consistent with a self-conceptual identity.
- 3) The tendency for prestige, competence, or goodness values to be closely and intrinsically associated with sex-role stereotypes. e.g., the ...association of masculinity with values of strength and power.
- 4) The tendency to view basic uniformity to one's own role as moral, as part of conformity to a general socio-moral order.
- 5) The tendency to imitate or model persons who are valued because of prestige and competence, and who are perceived as like the self.³

Differences Between Theories of Sex-Role Development

The main area of difference between cognitive and social learning theories concerning sex-role development is that the cognitive theory states that modeling occurs

¹L. A. Kohlberg, "A Cognitive Developmental Analysis of Children's Sex Role Concept and Attitudes," The Development of Sex Differences, ed. Maccoby, p. 95.

²Ibid.

³Ibid., p. 111.

first, followed by identification and the development of masculine/feminine values. Both the social learning theory and the cognitive theory differ from the traditional psychoanalytic view in the disbelief in biological origins of sex-roles. All three theories support the belief that much of this sex-role learned behavior is acquired before the age of five. "The cognitive theorists claim that sex typing begins when the child tells himself/herself, 'I am a girl' or 'I am a boy' and therefore, 'I must behave in a certain way.' In contrast psychoanalytic theorists and social-learning theorists hold that sex-typing commences at birth when the child begins to imitate highly rewarding and nurturant role models, primarily the parents."¹ Social-learning theorists differ from psychoanalytic theorists in contending that the significant models who influence the child's behavior besides the mother and father, include the media, teachers, and friends. In addition, social learning theorists hold that children of either sex are quite familiar with the behaviors allowed to the other sex and need only to be in a situation where these behaviors are rewarded in order to exhibit them.²

¹Leonard D. Goodstein and Alice G. Sargent, Psychological Theories of Sex Differences," Beyond Sex Roles, ed. Sargent, p. 176.

²Ibid.

Other Factors of Sex-Role
Development

"Human behavior, more than that of any other species, is plastic and dependent on experience and learning processes. Thus, any sex-related innate or hereditary factors will necessarily be viewed as predisposing rather than determining."¹

Presence or absence of hormones during gestation causes differences in the male and female brain. During puberty, these differences begin to operate. The hypothalamus is thought to trigger puberty which acts through the pituitary to bring about sexual development. These differences are responsible for the male's ejaculation, the female's menstruation, lactation and sexual behavior. There may be other things which are yet undiscovered which may cause additional sex differences.²

The female is cyclical while the male is acyclical. This is thought to have an influence on the nervous system. If this is true it can be expected to predispose certain cyclic changes in behavior while men do not undergo such changes. Many biologists conclude that there is much evidence for hormonally related mood swings in women. Recent studies lead to the speculation that assertiveness, self-esteem, and competitiveness are all highest at the middle

¹Norma L. McCoy, "Innate Factors in Sex Differences," Beyond Sex Roles, Sargent, p. 157.

²Ibid., p. 160.

of the cycle. Anxiety, tension and depression appear to be highest before and during the menses. This cycle is linked to the enzyme monoamine oxidase which has an effect on brain activity. A correlation has been found between the level of this enzyme and depression. "Low levels of estrogen are associated with high levels of this enzyme, and high levels of this enzyme are associated with depression."¹

Differences in Development of Sex-Roles for Males and Females

During early and middle childhood boys are more likely than girls to be pressured into appropriate sex role behavior. A boy may be referred to as a sissy. The label of tomboy for a girl does not carry the same level of negative connotation. "It is assumed that Mary will outgrow the tomboy stage; sissiness, on the other hand, is seen as a more permanent state."²

"The fact that before puberty fewer behavioral restrictions are placed on the feminine role has led Bardwick (1971) to suggest that the early identification of girls is bisexual."³ During childhood it is very acceptable for girls to be athletic and achievement oriented which some define as masculine traits. Boys must

¹Ibid., p. 160.

²Virginia E. O'Leary, Toward Understanding Women (Monterey, California: Brooks/Cole Publishing Co., 1977), p. 177.

³Ibid.

begin their masculinity early. Girls are not expected to be feminine before puberty. Femininity before puberty is purely biological. "As a result, for girls, the tasks of searching for identity, achieving autonomy, and developing internal criteria for self-esteem are delayed."¹

The Masculine Sex Role

By the time of puberty, it is nearly impossible to separate the innate differences from those caused by socialization. Our culture has established firm rules and standards about appropriate activities for males. Masculinity itself is never concretely defined. (It is vague but of a critical nature.) The man must measure up to certain standards. Men learn early that soft feelings are unacceptable. (Many men have paid a high cost for masculinity.) Men die younger and emotional denial places strains on the physical body. Most of the people arrested for crimes are males. Men are more likely to develop almost every disease. The average man will live about eleven years less than the average woman.²

Historically, men have been considered as the opposite of women. In recent years, men have begun to question notions about masculinity. It is important to distinguish between feelings and behaviors. According to

¹Ibid.

²Robert A. Fein, "Examining the Nature of Masculinity," Beyond Sex Roles, Sargent, p. 189.

Josselyn, "Man is physically strong, courageous, objective and unswayed by emotions other than anger; tenderness is permissible only within the framework of husbandry.

Personal, physical or emotional pain must be born by him with stoicism and without the support of others; meaningful relationships with others can be tolerated only if disguised by superficial social relationships and bravely abandoned without evidence of others as was the lone hunter of the past, caught in a blizzard many miles from his camping site. When man weeps at the new grave of his beloved wife or child, others accept his right to do so but shyly turn away as if to acknowledge that even man can be weak although he deserves privacy when his strength fails."¹

In most descriptions of the masculine sex-role, several themes present themselves. One of these themes is the suppression of almost all feeling or emotion. "This restriction is often not even recognized as a limitation, because emotional behavior is so far outside the usual range of male activity."² He further states that if men play they cannot cry or show weakness because these are feminine rather than masculine characteristics.³

Physical presence and mastery are also characteristics

¹I. M. Josselyn, "Sexual Identity Crises in the Life Cycle," Sex Roles in Changing Society, eds. G. H. Seward and R. C. Williamson (New York: Random House, 1970), p. 86.

²Jack Sawyer, "On Male Liberation," Female Psychology-The Emerging Self, ed. Sue Cox (Chicago: Science Research Associates, 1976), p. 391.

³Ibid., p. 390.

of masculinity. Sex-role stereotypes depict man as dominant in relations with others. Dominance in relationships is an indicator of success. Success is not possible for every man. Those who fail to achieve the dominant role are seen as failures and are often the object of jokes or pity. The avenue of dominance over a woman is open to a greater number of men as women are taught to assume the passive or submissive role.¹

In terms of sexual relationships with women, men are expected to assume the "playboy" role. They are expected to be "manly", self-assured, competent and experienced. These stereotypes cause men to be aware of a woman's physical appearance and unaware of the relationship with the whole person. Sexual relationships between men and women often demonstrate the minimization of personal relationships.²

Junior and senior high school students interviewed for the book "Breaking the Sex-Role Barrier" by Robert H. Loeb described masculinity as man's suit of armor. One girl commented "I think that women feel the same way about things, but I don't think men let it out as much. I think they keep it in because they think it's unmanly to let their emotions show. A woman doesn't feel ashamed to let her emotions go."³ Male norms stress courage, inner direction,

¹Ibid.

²Ibid.

³Loeb and Clay, p. 62.

certain forms of aggression, autonomy, mastery, adventure and toughness.¹

"Whether these and other 'masculine' characteristics or behaviors accurately describe most men (they probably do not), is not crucial. The key point in discussion of male stereotypes is that these character traits are consistently presented to boys and men as images to aspire to; as ideal types of manhood. When boys are told from their first years that 'real' men should be aggressive, independent, inexpressive, and tough, many spend much of their lives striving or straining to achieve an intangible masculinity, often paying the prices of an undercurrent of anxiety and self-hatred and needless hollowness in their interpersonal relationships."²

The male fills four major roles: husband, father, friend and worker. Each different role carries its own set of accepted behaviors. Men have traditionally been seen as the bridge between the world of work and the home.

The Feminine Sex-Role

Historically, women have been tied biologically to the home while most men have left the home for employment by the mid-twentieth century. Thus, the man assumed the role of breadwinner. As breadwinner, he generally assumed responsibility for financial decisions and maintenance of

¹Ibid., p. 65.

²Fein, Sargent, p. 190.

the home. For these reasons he became stereotyped as the head of the household. "With millions of women bringing home paychecks, the idea that the husband should be the sole family breadwinner is becoming anachronistic."¹

The role of father is distinct from the husband role. The father role stereotype is one who as head of the family remains distant, in charge of discipline, and not responsible for the everyday care of the children. When the child reaches school age, the father begins to interact on a social level with the child. The lack of nurturance toward young children on the part of the father causes confusion about how men should behave with their families. Most data previously collected on fathers' roles was obtained in interviews of mothers. Masculinity was viewed as minimal contact with feminine concerns such as general caretaking tasks. More recently, several studies have suggested that men are more concerned with the rearing of their children.²

Types of Relationships

There is much being written currently concerning male-male "friendly" relationships. Male-male friendships were previously treated in terms of groups rather than one on one friendships. Perhaps this may be attributed to the fact that little boys are not taught the skills required for forming intimate relationships. Man to man intimate relationships are also hampered by taboos concerning touching

¹Ibid., p. 191.

²Ibid., p. 193.

and emotional ties. These responses are only permitted in times of extreme joy, pain or competition.¹

The literature reflects friendship on a same sex basis, men with men and women with women. In the treatment of friendship, comradeship, the friendships that involve man/woman relationships are rarely discussed. If there is any mention, it is only in passing and given no credence. It is assumed by many that man/woman relationships imply a sexual agreement. This goes back to the previously discussed stereotype in which the man must assume the dominant role. The playboy image would dictate that the man could not see the woman as an equal but must regard her rather as a sex object. To admit that a woman is his friend requires that he view the woman as his equal and requires that he dismiss parts of the masculine role.²

The male worker role can be viewed much as the friend role. Acceptable jobs include those which involve physical strength, risk or danger. The masculine stereotype prohibits occupations of personal service or nurturance. Jobs typically delegated to women generally have salaries lower than those classified for males. There are many stresses inherent in working for the male because not all males can assume the dominant role. This reveals itself particularly when men are in competition with men. It is still more acceptable for a man to be subordinate to another man than to a woman.³

¹Ibid.

²Ibid.

³Ibid.

Much of psychological research is influenced by assumptions and biases about men and women held by researchers. If a researcher has a theory of personality it probably includes some thought on femininity. Women have traditionally been seen as passive, dependent, and incompetent. They have also been seen as shy, gullible, and inefficient. These qualities are the polar opposite of the characteristics presented in the traditional view of the man. These qualities represent some of the qualities less valued by society. Women are generally seen as caring, warm, genuine, open and tender. Again, this is the polar opposite of the traditional view of man. These qualities are generally viewed as the more socially desirable characteristics of women. Greek philosophers saw the woman as the incomplete man. Men are historically considered to be more intelligent than women although this has not been supported by research. Personality theorists who were usually male generally dealt with women who were in a subordinate position. "Their theories evolved, therefore, in ways that tended to explain and justify the disadvantaged position of women by postulating differences in nature for women and men."¹

Freud did little to promote women's equality. Beginning with penis envy women were still seen as

¹Hilary M. Hips and Nina Lee Colwill, The Psychology of Sex Differences (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1978), p. 28.

incomplete men, the clitoris just being an inferior penis. Freud felt that women have less pressure to resolve their Oedipal complexes than men. Freud felt that women who were not satisfied with their socially prescribed feminine role must be neurotic and psychosexually immature.¹

Since Freud's time, many theorists have supported, discussed and disputed his theories. Cross cultural studies have clouded the issue further. They provide little support for the ideas of psychosexual development proposed by Freud and stereotypes of feminine behavior. Theorists have also speculated on hormonal influences for female behavior.

Women are socialized to want to fulfill the roles that society needs. "When we look at the results of female socialization, we find a strong similarity between what our society labels, even extols, as the typical 'feminine' character structure and that of oppressed peoples in this country and elsewhere."²

As women grow older, their perceptions of themselves grow worse. As men grow older, their perceptions of themselves grow better. Men's opinion of women also grows worse as they grow older. Women's opinion of women also grows worse as they grow older. By college age, women generally see men as being more competent than women.³

¹Ibid., p. 34.

²Jo Freeman, "The Social Construction of the Second Sex," Female Psychology - The Emerging Self, ed. Sue Cox (Chicago: Science Research Associates, 1979), p. 136.

³Ibid., p. 137.

There is research concerning the biological basis for behavior. The case for a biological basis is easier to prove in some instances. Research has been done comparing human males and females to subhuman primates concerning certain characteristics. Nurturance and aggression can be rather easily studied in animals. Problems arise in the determination of what is learned behavior and what is innate behavior related to sex differences in the brain. "Thus, not only is there little agreement as to which sex differences have an innate basis, but even where there is agreement, the exact nature of such a basis is still unclear. Other sex differences commonly thought to have a considerable innate component are verbal fluency and articulation in females and spatial abilities in males."¹

Beatrice Whiting and Carolyn Pope Edwards in "A Cross Cultural Analysis of Sex Differences in the Behavior of Children Aged Three Through Eleven"² investigated the validity of the stereotype of sex differences as evidenced in the behavior of young children. If it is true that females are dependent, passive, and compliant, these behaviors should relate to differing categories of interactions. The research issues involved include: 1) Are

¹Norma L. McCoy, "Innate Factors in Sex Differences," Beyond Sex Roles, Sargent, p. 164.

²Beatrice Whiting and Carolyn Pope Edwards, "A Cross Cultural Analysis of Sex Differences in the Behavior of Children Aged Three Through Eleven," Female Psychology - The Emerging Self, ed. Cox, p. 50.

the observable differences genetic? 2) Are the observable differences a result of learning? The purpose of their study was to determine whether these characteristics are found in a variety of cultures or are they limited to particular areas and societies. Is there indeed a 'universal' sex role? To determine whether these differences appear in different cultures is difficult because of the impossibility of eliminating the influence of interaction on the young child.

The cross-cultural analysis covered behaviors including offering help, seeking help and comfort, sociable actions, imitating, suggesting responsibility, reprimanding, rough and tumble playing, insulting, and assaulting. Children were observed for two years and behaviors described were then coded. In five of the six societies, females of three to six years sought help more frequently than did males of the same age. In older children the data were more evenly split.¹

Seeking attention is done more often by males of three to six years than the same age of female. Females sought or offered physical contact more often than males. The females in the study were slightly more sociable than the males. There was no consistent trend of withdrawal from aggressive instigations. Females ages seven to eleven are significantly more willing to obey.²

¹Ibid.

²Ibid.

In the three to six year old age group, there was no consistent data with respect to nurturance. In the older age group (7-11), however, females were observed offering significantly more help and support.¹

"That there are no sex differences in the early age group, but rather marked increases with age, does not fill the innate differences hypothesis."² Dominance was observed in young males more frequently than young females. In the older age group the differences were less marked. Males in both age groups were observed in a greater number of instances of rough and tumble play. These males were also more verbally insulting than females.

The Androgynous Sex-Role

Masculinity and femininity have been traditionally seen as opposites. If feminine is passive, then masculine is aggressive. If masculine is dominant, then feminine is submissive. It seems that a combination of both masculine and feminine traits would produce a fully functioning individual. The adult in today's society must be able to look out for himself/herself. These behaviors required to be fully functioning also require a certain degree of independence. If the traditional sex-role stereotypes are used there results a conflict between the masculine and feminine roles required to achieve independence. Masculine stereotypes

¹Ibid.

²Ibid., p. 55.

inhibit the behavior required to relate on an intimate level with others. More recent concepts of sex-roles include a combining of the qualities of both masculine and feminine behaviors.¹

Masculine and feminine individuals tend to be role-oriented. The process-oriented individual is androgynous. This person is less bound by the past and less concerned about the future. This person can communicate with others honestly. However, there are both assets and liabilities to this type of orientation. These individuals benefit from their lack of role orientation, but may occasionally suffer from living in a society oriented to traditional sex-roles.²

Bem of Stanford University³ has developed a concept referred to as psychological androgyny. Bem feels that in American society, masculinity and femininity, being viewed as opposites, cause a person to take certain risks when he or she exhibits behaviors which enter the other sex's territory. On previous psychological tests of masculinity and femininity a person could have scored as either masculine or feminine, but not both.

A person has the potential to be both masculine

¹Sandra Bem, "Psychological Androgyny," Beyond Sex Roles, ed. Sargent (St. Paul: West Publishing Co., 1977), p. 319.

²Forisha, p. 105.

³Bem, "The Measurement of Psychological Androgyny," pp. 155-162.

and feminine. "The concept of androgyny (from the Greek andro, male and gyne, female) refers specifically to this blending of characteristics that have been traditionally thought of as masculine and feminine."¹

Bem uses the term androgyny to refer to those who exhibit both masculine and feminine behaviors. She developed the Bem Sex Role Inventory (BSRI) to measure masculinity, femininity and androgyny. The BSRI consists of 60 items. Twenty of these items reflect masculine stereotyped characteristics. Items for the masculinity scale include those reflecting ambition, dominance, and self-reliance. Items for the femininity scale include items reflecting gentleness, understanding and affectionateness. There are twenty additional items which represent characteristics applicable to both sexes. Subjects participating in the inventory rate themselves on a scale from one to seven on each of these characteristics, with one meaning never and seven meaning almost always. Totals for the masculine and feminine items are calculated. A person who endorses approximately the same amount of masculine and feminine items would then be classified as androgynous. Using this definition of androgyny, it is impossible to differentiate between those who score androgynous because they endorse neither masculine nor feminine qualities (those who do not see themselves as

¹Sandra L. Bem, "Bem Sex-Role Inventory," The 1977 Handbook for Group Facilitators, ed. J. Jones and William Pfeiffer (La Jolla, California: University Associates, 1977), p. 155.

highly masculine or feminine) and those who possess a high degree of masculine and feminine qualities.

A Revision in the Theory
of Androgyny

In 1974, Spence et. al.¹ suggested that those who are highly masculine and feminine differ greatly from only slightly masculine and feminine individuals who had previously been considered as androgynous. Spence devised a method which allowed the highly masculine-feminine group to be separated from the slightly masculine-feminine group. For the two groups which resulted from the division, the mean self-esteem scores were highest for the group which scored high on masculinity and femininity. As a result of this study only those who scored high on both scales were considered to be androgynous. The other group (low masculine/low feminine) is considered undifferentiated. Therefore Spence's system of division results in four divisions. Those individuals who score above the median for masculinity for the sample and below the median for femininity are classified as masculine. Those individuals who score high on femininity and low on masculinity are categorized as feminine. Individuals who score high on both scale are classified as androgynous. Individuals who score below the median on both scales are classified as undifferentiated.

¹Spence, Helmreich and Stapp, pp. 29-39.

	low masculinity	high masculinity
low femininity	undifferentiated	masculine
high femininity	feminine	androgynous

The Case For Androgyny

Bem feels that psychologically androgynous people are more likely than masculine or feminine people to be adaptable according to the requirements of the situation. She feels these individuals are less bound by stereotypes and therefore are more situationally effective. Bem has conducted several experiments to support this hypothesis. "It is our general hypothesis that a nonandrogynous sex role can seriously restrict the range of behaviors available to an individual as he or she moves from situation to situation."¹ The person who is sex typed strives to keep his or her behavior consistent with self-image. This individual who is sex reversed may well have wider sex role concepts. The androgynous person is theorized to have neither masculine nor feminine stereotypes and therefore should remain open to the requirements of the individual situation. "What I am hypothesizing, then, is that whereas a narrowly masculine self-concept may inhibit so-called feminine behaviors, and a narrowly feminine self-concept may inhibit so-called masculine

¹ Sandra L. Bem, "Sex-Role Adaptability: One Consequence of Psychological Androgyny," Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, XXXI (1975), 634-643.

behaviors, a mixed or androgynous self-concept allows an individual to engage in both masculine and feminine behaviors."¹

Bem used the BSRI to determine masculine, feminine and androgynous college students. She assessed sex role adaptability by presenting occasions for play behavior. It was found that androgynous subjects of both sexes conformed to the masculine role during pressure to conform but were playful when allowed time with a kitten. Masculine and feminine subjects were determined to exhibit what Bem calls behavioral deficits. Bem considers the feminine females to exhibit the greatest degree of behavioral deficits.

In the past few years research has been done on the various causes of androgyny and its relationship to other social factors. Bem and her colleagues have conducted studies to determine if reported self-evaluations are actually related to sex-role behaviors. For both sexes, feminine subjects were significantly more conforming than masculine or androgynous subjects. De Fronzo and Boudreau's 1977 results² provided further support for Bem's hypothesis. They found that the level of identification of males with their mothers was positively related to their femininity,

¹Ibid.

²James DeFronzo and Frances Boudreau, "Androgyny: Concept, Measurement, Correlated and Antecedents," Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Sociological Association. Chicago, Illinois, September 1977, 42-43.

but for females, mothers' employment had a positive effect on masculinity.

Recent Research on Sex-Roles and Personality

Broverman, Broverman, Clarkson, Rosenkrantz, and Vogel¹ found that clinicians strongly agree on behaviors and attributes which characterize the healthy man, woman and adult. Social desirability as perceived by nonprofessionals is strongly related to professional concepts of mental health. The masculine sex-role was perceived as more socially desirable by a sample of college students. Clinicians saw masculine individuals as being more healthy than feminine individuals. Masculine characteristics were seen as socially desirable for men or women. Feminine characteristics were seen as desirable for women but not for men.²

A significant difference exists between clinicians' concepts of health for adults and their concepts of health for females. A double standard of health exists. Healthy women are perceived as significantly less healthy by adult standards. Clinicians' concepts for a healthy man do not differ significantly from the concepts of a healthy adult. The agreement holds for both men and women clinicians. The authors continue to speculate on the causes for these

¹Inge K. Broverman and others, "Sex-Role Stereotypes and Clinical Judgments of Mental Health," Journal of Consulting Psychology, XXXIV (1970), 1-7.

²Ibid.

findings. "It seems inappropriate to apply different standards of health to men compared to women on purely biological grounds."¹ For a woman to be considered mentally healthy she must fit the feminine stereotype of behaviors although these behaviors are considered less socially desirable than masculine or adult behaviors. The authors imply that clinicians are perpetuating sex-role stereotypes by their attitudes toward stereotypes.

"It may be worthwhile for clinicians to critically examine their attitudes concerning sex-role stereotypes, as well as their position with respect to an adjustment notion of health. The cause of mental health may be better served if both men and women are encouraged toward maximum realization of individual potential rather than to an adjustment to existing restrictive sex roles."²

In 1976, Bem and Lenney examined masculine, feminine and androgynous individuals to determine their willingness to participate in sex-typed behaviors. Subjects were asked to select activities which they would be willing to perform and be photographed. Subjects were told that the photographs were to be used as props which would be used at another university. Sex-typed individuals expressed significantly more stereotyped preferences than androgynous individuals. Sex-typed individuals were more nervous and had more negative feelings than androgynous or sex-reversed subjects.³

¹Ibid.

²Ibid.

³Bem and Lenney, pp. 48-54.

During a second experiment, it was found that feminine and androgynous subjects were significantly more responsive to other's problems than masculine subjects. The results of these two experiments show the greater expressive capabilities of androgynous and feminine males in comparison to masculine males. Androgynous females were shown to be more responsive than masculine females. Sex-typed subjects showed significantly different responses from androgynous and sex-reversed subjects. Sex-typed subjects were more likely to prefer sex appropriate activity than sex-reversed or androgynous subjects. During actual cross-sex activity, the sex-typed individuals experienced the most discomfort.¹

The results of Bem's experiments appear to indicate that androgynous people experience more freedom to meet the demands of a situation than sex-typed people. The behavioral restrictions for masculinity appear more strict than those for femininity. Masculine men are more independent by definition, not nurturant. Feminine men are the opposite. Masculine women are independent, but feminine women showed less nurturance than expected. This would seem to suggest that the traditional sex-role stereotype limits women's ability to take action. Many experimenters feel that this calls into question the idea that masculine men and feminine women are the best examples of mental health.²

¹Ibid.

²Bem and Lenney.

Different researchers and therapists provide fuel for the controversy over which sex-role provides more benefits. Broverman et. al.¹ found that at that time clinicians felt that the masculine role most nearly represented mental health. Bem and her associates have suggested androgyny as mental health. To this point no research has been uncovered to suggest that the stereotyped feminine role typified mental health.

In a 1973 study, using criteria developed by Kohlberg (1964), Block found that androgyny was associated with advanced stages of moral reasoning. It was also reported that sex-appropriate individuals tend to come from homes in which parents display traditional role separation. Homes in which parents are less restricted in their sex-role behaviors tend to produce more androgynous children.²

Eman and Morse³ examined the impact of sexual identity on levels of self-esteem, self-acceptance and acceptance of others. Some traditional behaviors have been found to have negative consequences in personality development. Theories which maintain that traditional behavior is advantageous for men and women to retain their proper

¹Broverman and others, pp. 1-7.

²Jerome H. Block, "Conceptions of Sex-Role. Some Cross Cultural and Longitudinal Perspectives.", American Psychologist, XXVIII (1973), 512-526.

³Virginia A. Eman and Benjamin W. Morse, "A Multivariate Analysis of the Relationship Between Androgyny and Self-Esteem, Self-Acceptance and Acceptance of Others." Paper presented at the Speech Communication Association, Washington D. C., December 1977.

sex-role identities, have not been proven accurate. Traditional sex-role identities have caused inner conflicts. The study showed the maximum self-evaluation differences occurred between androgynous and undifferentiated subjects. Androgynous and masculine mean self-evaluation scores fell at the higher end of the scale and feminine and undifferentiated means fell at the lower end. The results confirmed the hypothesis stating that androgynous individuals would be likely to score higher than others in the areas of self-esteem, self-acceptance, and acceptance of others. Androgynous individuals appear to have a high level of adaptability which makes them more competent at interpersonal relationships.

The Eman and Morse study hypothesized that because of a multidimensional approach and greater psychological freedom, the androgynous person would be higher in self-evaluation. Upon comparison of the centroids, the androgynous and undifferentiated identities showed the greatest differences. Further examination showed that the androgynous and masculine identities were the most alike. The scores for the feminine and undifferentiated identities were both found to be on the lower end of the self-evaluation scale. Eman and Morse explained the closeness of the androgynous and masculine scores through the characteristics of the masculine and androgynous identities. Masculine people are generally more sure of themselves and need not depend on others for their measurement of self value. This feeling

of confidence must certainly account for their higher self-evaluations.¹

LaVanche and Garske at Ohio University attempted to determine the effects of masculinity, femininity, and androgyny on psychological adjustment and defense mechanisms. They attempted to test Bem's theory that androgyny has a positive effect on adjustment and adaptive functioning because of its greater behavioral flexibility.

LaVanche and Garske used large samples and newer methods of statistical analysis. The independent variable was sex-role orientation and was determined by administration of the BSRI. Adjustment and defensive strategies were the dependent variables. The Texas Social Behavior Inventory, Manifest Anxiety Scale, Adjective Check List, and Defense Mechanisms Inventory were used to measure the dependent variables. No interactions were found. "High masculinity was related to greater adjustment for both males and females. For males, high femininity was related to lesser adjustment and for females high femininity was related to greater adjustment. For both males and females, femininity was the predictive factor for defensive strategies. High feminine subjects scored significantly lower on TAO (Turning Against Object) defenses and higher on the REV (Reversal) defenses."²

¹Janet LaVanche and John F. Garske, "Effects of Masculinity, Femininity and Psychological Androgyny on Adjustment and Defense Mechanisms." Paper presented at Midwestern Psychological Association Convention, Chicago, Illinois, May 4, 1979.

²Ibid.

Same-sex-typing was associated with adaptive functioning. Reverse-sex-typing for females is also indicative of adjustment. Defensive strategies of high feminine subjects minimized aggression and incorporated negation, denial, reaction and formation.¹

¹Ibid.

Chapter 3

METHODOLOGY

One hundred seven subjects volunteered from several different classes and study halls at Des Moines Technical High School.¹ Students were given the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory and the Bem Sex-Role Inventory. The inventories were read and explained item by item so that the results would be useable. Each student listed age, sex, birth order, and occupation of head of household on the back of the inventory form.

Reliability data were provided by the authors of the inventories. The reliability of the inventories was checked by the test-retest method. Ten of the subjects were asked to retake the inventories three weeks after the first administration.

The Bem Sex-Role Inventory was scored according to the median score for masculine items and the median score for feminine items. On this basis the subjects were divided into four groups: masculine, feminine, androgynous, and undifferentiated.

The Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory was scored in the following manner. Lie scale items were eliminated.

¹Permission was obtained from the committee on research of the Des Moines Independent School District to conduct this research. Findings of the study will be submitted to the schools at the end of the study.

Lie scale items are those which make absolute statements as, "I never worry about anything." The remaining items were scored one point for each positive statement the student made about himself or herself. Negative statements about self were not given points.

Groups were formed according to birth order. First and only children were grouped because of the small numbers in the sample. Middle and youngest children were the two other groups.

Groups were also formed according to socioeconomic status. Division was made according to the occupation of the head of household using the five socioeconomic statuses of the Bureau of the Census as follows:

Group 1. Professional-technical workers

Group 2. Managers, officials, proprietors, clerical workers, sales workers

Group 3. Craftsmen and foremen

Group 4. Operatives, service workers (including private household), farmers, farm managers

Group 5. Laborers, farm workers, farm foremen

Subjects were divided according to race into two groups. The groups were white and non-white.

The following statistical analyses were made. An analysis of variance was performed for the four groups, masculine, feminine, androgynous, and undifferentiated for self-esteem. When a significant F was found t-tests were used to determine which means were significantly different.

Chi squares of independence were performed for birth order, socioeconomic status, age, race, and sex role.

Test-retest reliability was calculated for both inventories.

Following are the hypotheses of this study and the corresponding statistical design computed for each hypothesis.

1. Null Hypothesis: There is no difference between the mean self-esteem scores for masculine, feminine, androgynous, and undifferentiated subjects.

Design: Mean self-esteem scores for the sex-role groups were computed. The means were then compared by use of an ANOVA and individual means compared using t-tests.

2. Hypothesis: Sex-roles are independent of sex.

Design: A chi square of independence was computed for sex and sex-role.

3. Hypothesis: Sex-roles are independent of age.

Design: A chi square of independence was computed for age and sex-role.

4. Hypothesis: Sex-roles are independent of race.

Design: A chi square of independence was computed for race and sex-role.

5. Hypothesis: Sex-roles are independent of birth order.

Design: A chi square of independence was computed for birth order and sex role.

6. Hypothesis: Sex-roles are independent of socioeconomic status.

Design: A chi square of independence was computed for socioeconomic status and sex-role.

BEM SEX-ROLE INVENTORY TEST EVALUATION

The Bem Sex-Role Inventory treats masculinity and femininity as independent dimensions. The inventory contains a masculinity scale of twenty items and a femininity scale of twenty items. The remaining twenty items are filler items.

The test was copyrighted in 1977 by Sandra Lipsitz Bem. Time required for completion of the inventory is twenty to thirty minutes. The inventory is available through "The Measurement of Psychological Androgyny." Bem, S. L. Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology 42 - p. 155-162 1974, 2.

The inventory is easily administered. Directions are clear and easily followed. Subjects rate themselves on the characteristics listed from one (never) to seven (always). The inventory is hand scored. The inventory was designed for research purposes and not as a test for labeling of individuals.

The Bem Sex-Role Inventory has been administered mostly to college students at Stanford and Foothills Junior College. The original sample was comprised of 444 males and 279 females at Stanford and 117 males and 77 females, paid subjects at Foothills Junior College.

Test-retest reliability indicates a .90 reliability for masculinity, a .90 reliability for femininity, and a .93 reliability for androgyny after a four week period. The

inventory has good face validity although little is known about construct validity at this time.¹

¹Bem, "The Measurement of Psychological Androgyny," pp. 155-162.

COOPERSMITH SELF-ESTEEM INVENTORY

The Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory is compiled from results of a study on preadolescents of middle-class background who were male, white, and normal. The term normal meaning no indication of serious stress symptoms of emotional disorders. Teacher ratings, school records, and screening interviews were used. To measure self-esteem the author developed a fifty item inventory. Many of the items came from earlier inventories. Several of the items were original items. The resulting inventory consisted of fifty items designed to measure the subjects self-attitudes in the areas of peers, parents, school, and personal interests.¹

The test-retest reliability after a five week interval in a sample of thirty fifth grade children was .88. The reliability after a three year interval with a different sample of fifty-six children was .70. No data is currently available from other sources on the validity or reliability of the instrument.²

This instrument was chosen for use in this study for several reasons. The instrument is easily used. The inventory is easily administered. The instrument contains no questions deemed inappropriate for the group in the sample by the experimenter.

¹Coopersmith, Stanley, The Antecedents of Self-Esteem, (San Francisco: W. H. Freeman and Co., 1967).

²Ibid.

Chapter 4

PRESENTATION OF DATA

This chapter presents findings of this study. Each hypothesis is stated with the statistical analyses dealing with that hypothesis.

The breakdown of subjects was as follows:

Sex

66 Males

41 Females

Age

1 14 year old

11 15 year olds

34 16 year olds

48 17 year olds

11 18 year olds

2 19 year olds

Socioeconomic Status

Group 1 16

Group 2 40

Group 3 17

Group 4 19

Group 5 15

Birth Order

8 Only children

28 First born children

52 Middle children

19 Youngest children

Race

82 White

25 Non-white¹

¹This group was predominantly black although two Mexican Americans were included.

The reliability of the inventories was checked by the test-retest method. Ten of the subjects were asked to retake the inventories three weeks after the first administration. Reliability for the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory was .78. Reliability for the Bem Sex-Role Inventory masculine scale was .75 and .74 for the feminine scale.

First Hypothesis

Hypothesis: There is no difference between the mean self-esteem scores for masculine, feminine, androgynous and undifferentiated subjects.

Subjects were divided into masculine, feminine, androgynous, and undifferentiated groups by using the Bem Sex-Role Inventory. Medians were calculated for masculinity and femininity. Those subjects who fell above the median on masculinity and below the median on femininity were classified as masculine. Those subjects who fell below the median on masculinity and above the median on femininity were classified as feminine. Those subjects who fell above the median on both masculinity and femininity were classified as androgynous. Those subjects whose scores fell below the median on both masculinity and femininity were classified as undifferentiated.

Mean self-esteem scores were calculated for each of the four sex-role groups.

Table 1
Coopersmith Scores for
Sex-Role Groups

Masculine	Feminine	Androg.	Undiff.
N=23	N=17	N=33	N=34
$\bar{x}=39.3$	$\bar{x}=29.9$	$\bar{x}=34.6$	$\bar{x}=30.4$
s=6.0	s=8	s=6.3	s=8.1

Mean comparisons by ANOVA revealed that sex-role groups differed in self-esteem ($F=8.48$ df 3, $p < .01$).

Table 2
Analysis of Variance of Sex-Role
and Self-Esteem Scores

Source	df	Ss	Ms	F
Groups	3	1373	$M_{sg}=458$	8.48
Within	103	5525	$M_{sw}=54$	
Total	106	6898		

Masculine subjects were higher in measured self-esteem than feminine, androgynous, or undifferentiated subjects. Between group tests showed androgynous subjects were higher in measured self-esteem than feminine or undifferentiated subjects. Feminine and undifferentiated subjects mean self-esteem scores did not differ significantly.

Table 3

t-tests for Differences Between Mean
Self-Esteem Scores of
Sex-Role Groups

	Androgynous	Undifferentiated	Feminine
Masculine	2.42**	4.59**	4.05**
Androgy- nous		2.33**	2.14**
Undiffer- entiated			.02

**p < .01

Other Hypotheses

Other hypotheses used in the study were tested using Chi squares of independence. Symbols used in charts include f_o (Frequency observed), f_e (frequency expected), and p (probability).

Second Hypothesis

Hypothesis: Sex-roles are independent of sex. A chi square of independence was calculated for sex and sex-role.

The values obtained from the chi square of independence of sex and sex-role do not support the hypothesis that sex-role is independent of sex. Major contributions to the large chi square value fall in three places. There was a small number of males who were classified as feminine (only four out of sixty-six). Only three out of forty-one females were classified as masculine. There was a larger number of females than would be expected who were classified as feminine.

Table 4

Chi Square of Independence of
Sex-Role and Sex

	Masc.	Feminine	Androg.	Undiff.	
Male	fo 18 fe 12.95 1.97	fo 4 fe 10.48 4.01	fo 20 fe 20.35 .01	fo 24 fe 22.20 .15	66
Female	fo 3 fe 8.05 3.17	fo 13 fe 6.51 6.47	fo 13 fe 12.64 .01	fo 12 fe 13.79 .23	41
	21	17	33	36	107

$$\chi^2 = 16.02$$

$$p < .05 \quad \chi^2 = 7.815 (3 \text{ df})$$

Third Hypothesis

Hypothesis: Sex-roles are independent of age.

For this sample the data supports the hypothesis that sex-role is independent of age. Groupings into fourteen, fifteen, and sixteen year olds and seventeen, eighteen, and nineteen year olds were made because of the small expected frequencies of other groupings.

Table 5

Chi Square of Independence of
Sex-Role and Age

	Masc.	Feminine	Androg.	Undiff.	
14, 15 & 16 yr. Olds	fo 13 fe 9.89 .98	fo 7 fe 7.31 .01	fo 15 fe 14.19 .05	fo 11 fe 14.62 .90	46
17, 18 & 19 yr. Olds	fo 10 fe 13.11 .74	fo 10 fe 9.69 .01	fo 18 fe 18.81 .03	fo 23 fe 19.38 .68	61
	23	17	33	34	107

$$\chi^2 = 3.4$$

$$p < .05 \quad \chi^2 = 7.815 (3 \text{ df})$$

Fourth Hypothesis

Hypothesis: Sex-roles are independent of race.

Subjects in the group were classified as white or

non-white. For this sample data supports the hypothesis that sex-roles are independent of race.

Table 6

Chi Square of Independence of
Sex-Role and Race

	Masc.	Feminine	Androg.	Undiff.	
White	fo 17 fe 16.09 .05	fo 16 fe 14.56 .14	fo 25 fe 26.05 .04	fo 24 fe 25.28 .06	82
Non White	fo 4 fe 4.9 .17	fo 7 fe 4.44 1.48	fo 11 fe 7.94 1.18	fo 12 fe 7.71 2.39	25
	21	19	34	33	107

$$\chi^2 = 5.51$$

$$p < .05 \quad \chi^2 = 7.815(3 \text{ df})$$

Fifth Hypothesis

Hypothesis: Sex-roles are independent of birth order.

Data collected from this sample supports the hypothesis that sex-role is independent of birth order. In the group of first and only children there was a smaller than expected number of feminine subjects and a larger than expected number of undifferentiated subjects. The

data, however, are not significant.

Table 7

Chi Square of Independence of
Sex-Role and Birth Order

	Masc.	Feminine	Androg.	Undiff.	
First & Only	fo 6 fe 7.40 .26	fo 3 fe 5.72 1.29	fo 12 fe 11.44 .03	fo 15 fe 11.44 1.11	36
Middle	fo 13 fe 10.69 .50	fo 11 fe 8.26 .91	fo 12 fe 16.52 1.24	fo 16 fe 16.52 .02	52
Youngest	fo 3 fe 3.90 .21	fo 3 fe 3.02 .00	fo 10 fe 11.43 .18	fo 3 fe 6.04 1.53	19
	22	17	34	34	107

$$\chi^2 = 7.28$$

$$p < .05 \quad \chi^2 = 17.59 (6 \text{ df})$$

Sixth Hypothesis

Hypothesis: Sex-roles are independent of socioeconomic status.

The upper two socioeconomic statuses and the lower two statuses were combined because of low expected frequencies. The middle or third socioeconomic status

group was dropped from observation due to the low expected frequency. Comparisons were then made on the two upper statuses versus the two lower statuses.

Data from this study support the hypothesis that sex-roles are independent of socioeconomic status.

Table 8

Chi Square of Independence of
Sex-Role and Socioeconomic Status

	Masc.	Feminine	Androg.	Undiff.	
1 & 2	fo 13 fe 10.39 .66	fo 9 fe 9.78 .06	fo 15 fe 17.71 .42	fo 18 fe 17.11 .05	55
Middle	5	2	5	6	
4 & 5	fo 4 fe 6.61 1.03	fo 7 fe 6.22 .10	fo 14 fe 11.28 .66	fo 10 fe 10.89 .07	35
	17	16	29	28	90

$$\chi^2=3.05$$

$$p < .05 \quad \chi^2=7.815(3 \text{ df})$$

Chapter 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study focused attention on the relationship of sex-roles to self-esteem. It also examined sex-roles in relationship to age, race, birth order, and socioeconomic status. One hundred seven students at Des Moines Technical High School participated in the study.

Following is a summary of the findings of this study.

- I. Masculine subjects were higher in self-esteem than androgynous, feminine, and undifferentiated subjects. Androgynous subjects were higher in self-esteem than feminine and undifferentiated subjects. Feminine and undifferentiated subjects were essentially the same in terms of self-esteem.
- II. Sex-roles are not independent of sex. There was little cross-sex classification. That is, there were few males who fell in the feminine category and few females in the masculine category.
- III. Sex-roles are independent of age.
- IV. Sex-roles are independent of race.
- V. For this sample, sex-role appears to be independent of birth order. In the group of first and only children, there were less than the

expected number of feminine subjects and greater than the expected number of undifferentiated subjects. In the group of youngest children, there were fewer undifferentiated subjects than expected. The differences, however, are not significant at the .05 level.

VI Sex-roles are independent of socioeconomic status.

Conclusions

Recent research seems to have clouded the issue as to which sex-role provides the greatest level of self-esteem. Bem and her colleagues feel that the androgynous sex-role provides the greatest flexibility and the highest levels of self-esteem. Broverman et al. showed that clinicians felt that the masculine sex-role provided the most accurate picture of the healthy adult. La Vanche and Garske showed that those who adopted the masculine sex-role were the best adjusted and highest in self-esteem.

Results of this study did not support the hypothesis of Bem et al. that androgynous subjects were higher in self-esteem. For those subjects, the masculine sex-role provided the greatest amount of self-esteem. The androgynous subjects were the second highest in self-esteem but still below the masculine subjects. Feminine and undifferentiated subjects showed a lower level of self-esteem than either masculine or androgynous subjects. There is little evidence to support the theory that individuals who adopt the feminine sex-role have high levels of self-esteem.

This study does not support the hypothesis of Spence that androgynous subjects are different from undifferentiated subjects. Androgynous subjects' mean scores were higher on the measure of self-esteem.

The results of this study were similar to the results of the La Vanche and Garske study in showing that the masculine sex-role still provided higher levels of self-esteem than other sex-roles. In the La Vanche and Garske study, as in this study, masculine individuals were significantly higher in self-esteem than androgynous individuals. Androgynous individuals were the second highest sex-role group in terms of self-esteem.

Data gained from this study provide some information on the relationship between sex-role and age, birth order, socioeconomic status, sex, and race. Sex is related to sex-role. What the extent of this relationship is has not been discovered from this study. To say that sex-roles are independent of other variables studied is the only conclusion to be reached from data of this study.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made.

- A. It would be incompatible with the results of this study to recommend the androgynous sex-role to promote high levels of self-esteem.
- B. Adoption of the masculine sex-role should not be

discouraged with regard to providing high levels of self-esteem.

- C. Continued research should be done on a more generalized population before assumptions are made on which sex-role should be encouraged.
- D. Research should be done to determine what the other effects of sex-role are on personality (or personality on sex-role).
- E. More research should be done to determine causal relationships for sex-role.

It is apparent that several questions remain unanswered. Which sex-role would provide the highest level of self-esteem for a generalized population? Does the sex-role which provides the highest level of self-esteem provide psychological adjustment? Should cross-cultural differences in sex-role socialization be encouraged? Should parents actively encourage their children to adopt a certain sex-role or should children choose their own? These and other questions deserve further research consideration.

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Appendix A
Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory

Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory

Please mark each statement in the following way:

If the statement describes how you usually feel,
put a check in the column, "Like Me."

If the statement does not describe how you usually
feel, put a check in the column, "Unlike Me."

There are no right or wrong answers.

	<u>Like Me</u>	<u>Unlike Me</u>
1. I spend a lot of time daydreaming.	_____	_____
2. I'm pretty sure of myself.	_____	_____
3. I often wish I were someone else.	_____	_____
4. I'm easy to like.	_____	_____
5. My parents and I have a lot of fun together.	_____	_____
6. I never worry about anything.	_____	_____
7. I find it very hard to talk in front of the class.	_____	_____
8. I wish I were younger.	_____	_____
9. There are lots of things about myself I'd change if I could.	_____	_____
10. I can make up my mind without too much trouble.	_____	_____
11. I'm a lot of fun to be with.	_____	_____
12. I get upset easily at home.	_____	_____
13. I always do the right thing.	_____	_____
14. I'm proud of my school work.	_____	_____
15. Someone always has to tell me what to do.	_____	_____

	<u>Like Me</u>	<u>Unlike Me</u>
16. It takes me a long time to get used to anything new.	_____	_____
17. I'm often sorry for the things I do.	_____	_____
18. I'm popular with kids my own age.	_____	_____
19. My parents usually consider my feelings.	_____	_____
20. I'm nevery unhappy.	_____	_____
21. I'm doing the best work that I can.	_____	_____
22. I give in very easily.	_____	_____
23. I can usually take care of myself.	_____	_____
24. I'm pretty happy.	_____	_____
25. I would rather play with children younger than me.	_____	_____
26. My parents expect too much of me.	_____	_____
27. I like everyone I know.	_____	_____
28. I like to be called on in class.	_____	_____
29. I understand myself.	_____	_____
30. It's pretty tough to be me.	_____	_____
31. Things are all mixed up in my life.	_____	_____
32. Kids usually follow my ideas.	_____	_____
33. No one pays much attention to me at home.	_____	_____
34. I never get scolded.	_____	_____
35. I'm not doing as well in school as I'd like to.	_____	_____

	<u>Like Me</u>	<u>Unlike Me</u>
36. I can make up my mind and stick to it.	_____	_____
37. I really don't like being a boy/girl.	_____	_____
38. I have a low opinion of myself.	_____	_____
39. I don't like to be with other people.	_____	_____
40. There are many times when I'd like to leave home.	_____	_____
41. I'm never shy.	_____	_____
42. I often feel upset in school.	_____	_____
43. I often feel ashamed of myself.	_____	_____
44. I'm not as nice looking as must people.	_____	_____
45. If I have something to say, I usually say it.	_____	_____
46. Kids pick on me very often.	_____	_____
47. My parents understand me.	_____	_____
48. I always tell the truth.	_____	_____
49. My teacher makes me feel I'm not good enough.	_____	_____
50. I don't care what happens to me.	_____	_____
51. I'm a failure.	_____	_____
52. I get upset easily when I'm scolded.	_____	_____
53. Most people are better liked than I am.	_____	_____
54. I usually feel as if my parents are pushing me.	_____	_____
55. I always know what to say to people.	_____	_____

	<u>Like Me</u>	<u>Unlike Me</u>
56. I often get discouraged in school.	_____	_____
57. Things usually don't bother me.	_____	_____
58. I can't be depended upon.	_____	_____

Appendix B
Bem Sex-Role Inventory

BEM SEX-ROLE INVENTORY

Describe yourself on the following items. Use this scale.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Never Almost Never	Usually Not True	Sometimes But Infrequently	Occasionally True	Often True	Usually True	Always or Almost Always True
1. Self-reliant		14. Flatterable		26. Sensitive to the needs of others		
2. Yielding		15. Happy		27. Truthful		
3. Helpful		16. Strong personality		28. Willing to take risks		
4. Defends own beliefs		17. Loyal		29. Understanding		
5. Cheerful		18. Unpredictable		30. Secretive		
6. Moody		19. Forceful		31. Makes decisions easily		
7. Independent		20. Feminine		32. Compassionate		
8. Shy		21. Reliable		33. Sincere		
9. Conscientious		22. Analytical		34. Self-sufficient		
10. Athletic		23. Sympathetic		35. Eager to soothe hurt feelings		
11. Affectionate		24. Jealous		36. Conceited		
12. Theatrical		25. Has leadership abilities		37. Dominant		
13. Assertive				38. Soft spoken		

(Continued)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Never or Almost Never	Usually Not True	Sometimes But Infrequently	Occasionally True	Often True	Usually True	Always or Almost Always True
39. Likeable			47. Gullible		55. Competitive	
40. Masculine			48. Inefficient		56. Loves Children	
41. Warm			49. Acts as a leader		57. Tactful	
42. Soluemn			50. Childlike		58. Ambitious	
43. Willing to take a stand			51. Adaptable		59. Gentle	
44. Tender			52. Individualistic		60. Conventional	
45. Friendly			53. Does not use harsh language			
46. Aggressive			54. Unsystematic			